

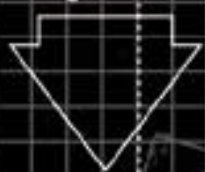
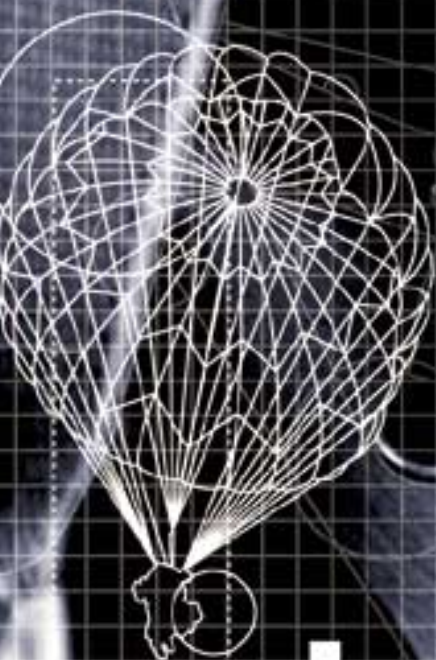
Son  
of a **Seabee Surfer**

www.news.navy.mil

# AI HANDS

MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. NAVY

MAY 2002



# Learning to Soar

# High Jump

Photo by PH3 (AW/SW) Jayme Pastoric

**AD1 Mark Siongco** leaps into the air to check the wing of an **F/A-18 Hornet** before the aircraft launches. Siongco is assigned to **Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 147 Argonauts** embarked with **Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 9** aboard **USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74)** in support of **Operation Enduring Freedom**.





## FOD Reflections

Photo by PH2 Jennifer Smith

LT James Bahr, attached to Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron (HM) 15 *Black Hawks*, conducts pre-flight checks on an *MH-53 Sea Dragon* helicopter on board *USS Tarawa* (LHA 1), while crew members do a Foreign Object Debris (FOD) walk down. *Tarawa* is conducting routine training operations off the coast of Southern California.

Speaking with Sailors

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy  
MCPON (SS/AW) Terry D. Scott

A Question from a Recent MCPON All Hands Call:

Q: What are you looking forward to during your tour as the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy?

A: It's such an honor to follow in the footsteps of such a distinguished group of enlisted leaders as the nine visionary master chiefs who preceded me as MCPON. Like each of them, I look forward to fostering an environment where Sailors can seize their potential, and hone their skills to take on even more challenging roles. I want to keep Sailors informed of the many exciting developments that will help all Sailors grow to their maximum potential.



Photo by JO1 Preston Keres

I believe that every Sailor, no matter what their rank, has the right to believe that what he or she does is important. It shouldn't surprise any of us when junior Sailors expect us to care about what they're doing. And as leaders, we must all uphold our responsibility to developing and mentoring them into the Navy's future leaders.


Speaking with Sailors is a monthly column initiated by the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy as a way of reaching out to the men and women of the fleet, whether they are stationed just down the road or halfway around the world.

I also plan to work on maintaining our commitment to Navy families. Our Sailors will always answer the call when they know that their family is being adequately provided for. I am committed to making sure every family member feels *they* are a part of our Navy. We need to work hard at making sure our families are included and fully informed in

policies that directly affect them.

As MCPON, I am eager to get to the business of representing all Sailors and their families, on issues that impact their everyday lives. I gained a tremendous amount of pride and inspiration from visiting with young Sailors and Marines on the front lines in Afghanistan and North Arabian Sea during my previ-

ous tour as the CNO-directed command master chief for COMUSNAVCENT/5th Fleet. In my current position, I look forward to getting out there and hearing from the entire fleet.

In upcoming issues I will share with you the comments, questions and concerns I receive from Sailors during my visits around the fleet. Keep up the great work you are doing — *you* make a difference every day. 



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*Images are due June 15, 2002.* Mail entries to: Naval Media Center, *All Hands* Magazine, Attn: Photo Editor, 2713 Mitscher Rd. S.W., Anacostia Annex, D.C. 20373

## Surface Force to Begin Sea Swap Initiative This Summer

**T**his summer, the Surface Force will begin an initiative to test the effectiveness of deploying a single ship for 18 months while swapping out crews at six-month intervals.



USS Kinkaid (DD 965)

Called Sea Swap, this initial two-phased initiative will involve three **Spruance-class** destroyers: **USS Fletcher (DD 992)**, **USS Kinkaid (DD 965)** and **USS Oldendorf (DD 972)**; and three **Arleigh Burke-class** destroyers: **USS Higgins (DDG 76)**, **USS John Paul Jones (DDG 53)** and **USS Benfold (DDG 65)**.

During a time when the Navy's force structure is stretched increasingly thin by operational requirements around the globe, it is expected to produce significant increases in forward-presence and on-station time.

Here's how it will work:

For the **Spruance-class** phase, **Fletcher** and her crew will deploy with their battle group this summer, but after six months, only the crew will return. The ship will remain deployed and be manned by the crew from **Kinkaid**. After completing their training cycle and decommissioning **Kinkaid**, these Sailors will fly to a port in either Australia or Singapore to assume ownership of **Fletcher** and steam her back on-station.

After six months, they will be replaced by the crew from **Oldendorf**, who will have completed the same training and decommissioning schedule with their ship before flying out to relieve the **Kinkaid** crew. After four more months on station, the **Oldendorf** crew will then bring the ship (**Fletcher**) back to the United States where it too will be decommissioned.

Additionally, by executing this plan, the Navy will be able to eliminate the deployment of **USS Paul F. Foster (DD 964)** because the additional on-station time generated by swapping out the crews means a ship will already be in theater meeting that requirement.

**VADM Tim LaFleur, Commander, Naval Surface Forces Pacific**, the leader of the Surface Navy, noted that's exactly what makes the initiative worth doing.

"Basically, we're getting three additional months of forward-presence when compared to what we'd get out of a standard three ship deployment," said LaFleur.

"When you look at three standard six-month deployments from the West Coast to 5th Fleet, the transit time there and back results in ships being on-station for about 100 days. With Sea Swap, because we're flying two crews out, we can take the time we save from eliminating some of those lengthy transits and apply it to on-station time. What we get is a ship in a specific AOR (area operating region) for approximately 90 days longer than we would have had if we did standard deployments."

LaFleur said a Navy force structure stretched thin by global requirements puts additional emphasis on the importance of the Sea Swap initiative.

"Everyone agrees we need more ships than the 300-plus we have right now. But the reality is that it's going to take awhile for our force structure to grow to where we need it to be," said LaFleur. "Until then,

we need to explore other options that will help us to meet the forward-presence requirements Americans have come to expect from their Navy."

While this will be an entirely new way to deploy, LaFleur believes there will be quality-of-service benefits for the surface Sailors involved in the initiative.

"We frequently hear from Sailors that they don't like the transits that come with a deployment. They say doing the real-world missions once they're on station are very rewarding, but the transits can be long and tedious. With Sea Swap, that's gone. Sailors will get on station a lot quicker."

And like standard deployments, Sea Swap Sailors will still get quality port visits going into and coming out of the theater of operations. They just might fly there instead.

LaFleur said he also expects the Sea Swap experiment will produce efficiencies in fuel costs.

"We won't use the transit fuel we normally would, and will apply those savings toward some of the unique costs associated with the initiative such as flying the crews to the turnover port and putting them up in berthing facilities."

Because the ships are similar, LaFleur doesn't anticipate the incoming crews having any great difficulties adjusting to their "new" ship.

"I know every ship has its own little quirks, and that's exactly why we're going to have the outgoing and incoming crews spend a few weeks together turning over. But when it comes to these DDs and DDGs, they're very similar."


Because the **Fletcher** and **Higgins** hulls will not be going through the standard maintenance availabilities that would typically follow a six-month deployment, other options are

being planned to ensure the material readiness of the two ships remains high throughout the 18-month periods.

"We're looking at things such as completing additional preventive maintenance on both ships prior to their departures to reduce the need for in-theater repairs and certifications," said LaFleur. "We're also planning on having additional maintenance teams ride the ships during their transits to and from station to support any minor repairs that are required."

Does LaFleur see this concept expanding to other classes of ships?

"Yes, and that's really why we're doing this. To see what works and what doesn't, so if the Navy decides, for whatever reason, that we need increased forward presence in a certain part of the world, we'll know whether swapping out crews is a viable option." LaFleur concluded, "You can't know that unless you do it and find out."

For additional information on the **Pacific Fleet Surface Force**, go to [www.surfpac.navy.mil](http://www.surfpac.navy.mil). 

*Story by Naval Surface Force Pacific Public Affairs*

### Project SAIL: Sailor Advocacy through Interactive Leadership

**P**roject SAIL, a program unfurled at the recent All-Flag Officer conference in Orlando, Fla., is transforming the way detailing works for mission readiness, while making Sailors the focus of the detailing process.

Project SAIL (Sailor Advocacy through Interactive Leadership)

has been developed in response to fleet and individual Sailor input. It combines changing the philosophy of how Sailors are detailed with capturing Web-based technology to improve communications between the fleet, detailers and Sailors.

"Our Sailors have dedicated themselves to a lifestyle of service," said **Chief of Naval Operations ADM Vern Clark**. "Project SAIL will, in return, ensure they and their families have more resources, information and options to help shape their careers."

**ADM Jake Shuford**, head of **Navy Personnel Command's** 400 detailers, said, "By working with each Sailor and teaming with command leadership, we focus on the individual in a career context. The objective is improved readiness through a better understanding of each Sailor's needs and abilities."

A key feature of Project SAIL is Team Detailing, the integration of detailers with each command's retention team. Team Detailing relies on a spreadsheet of all Sailors transferring within one year. The teaming spreadsheet includes Sailors' preferences, special competencies, family and career considerations and additional comments from the command's career development board.

The goal is to exchange information early in the detailing process. This is accomplished by importing this spreadsheet information into the Job Assignment and Selection System (JASS). This is the first in a series of planned upgrades to turn JASS into "Super JASS," and make it more useful with a wider range of Sailor options.

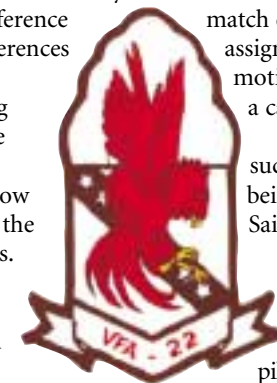
Early indications show the tools and concepts associated with Project SAIL are working.

Aboard **USS Thach (FFG 43)**,

first-term reenlistment rates for the first three quarters of fiscal year 2001 increased from 33 percent to 50 percent; first-term attrition fell from 33 percent to 20 percent.

The "**Fighting Redcocks**" of **Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 22** experienced similar success, when 29 of 30 Sailors recently received their preference on orders — preferences shaped through a healthy mentoring process within the command.

Detailers are now becoming part of the mentoring process. Early, planned communication with detailers and command career development boards is making Sailors aware of important information concerning their future options.



Matching the needs of the Navy with the desires and abilities of Sailors isn't difficult in most cases, according to Shuford. The end result will be expanded options for the Sailor, greater trust and satisfaction with the detailing process and better fleet readiness because detailers are more likely to

match each Sailor with an assignment he or she is motivated for and views in a career context.

Additional tools, such as technology, are being used to ensure Sailors' success.

San Diego's Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) is currently using the pilot program for a new classification system called Rating Identification Engine (RIDE). The program looks at a recruit's aptitude, personality and interests

## Shipmates

### Aviation Machinist's Mate 1st Class (AW) Somsak Palasak

of **Fighter Squadron (VF) 154** in Atsugi, Japan, was recently recognized for his work as the squadron's power plants branch night-shift supervisor. He removed and replaced more than 40 aircraft engines and was responsible for discovering an internally "FODed" (foreign object damaged) engine, which if left undiscovered, could have led to catastrophic turbine failure.



"This is a major shift in the philosophy of detailing," said Shuford. "The detailer now becomes the Sailor's advocate."

Working in conjunction with the Sailor's command retention team, detailers factor in the needs of the Sailor and family, location options and billet desires.

before classification decisions are made. RIDE improves the likelihood that prospective Sailors will begin their Navy careers in the right rating for them.

The Navy's 3,400 master chief petty officers will become the first Sailors to be detailed using Web-based technology

# Around the Fleet

beginning in September. In many cases, detailing will focus on their leadership abilities within certain skill areas, as opposed to rating specific assignments.

This flexibility opens up billets not previously available. An

ship needs.

SAIL includes several major initiatives that will move the Navy to a Web-based, incentive-driven, technology-enabled distribution system over the next several years. An example of future initiatives within Project SAIL is Distribu-

## Shipmates



**Boatswain's Mate 1st Class (AW/SW) Tony Cochran** has been named **USS Dwight D. Eisenhower's (CVN 69)** Sailor of the Year for 2001. A native of Charlotte, N.C.,

Cochran enlisted in 1986, and currently serves as acting chief for Deck Department's First Division; he aspires to be a master chief boatswain's mate before retiring. Cochran holds several other titles aboard "Ike," including two Sailor of the Quarter awards, and the ship's "Strongest Sailor," as he can bench-press 575 pounds.

important byproduct of this initiative will be a reduction in the number of E-9 billets gapped at sea. Detailing master chiefs based on leadership and management skills, rather than just more narrowly defined rating skills, will better serve fleet leader-

tion Incentive Pay.

What happens when orders show up on requisitions for which no one wants to reenlist? Distribution incentives, like the recently enacted Location Selective Reenlistment Bonus (LSRB) pilot program, offer

## Ricky's Tour

By J02 Mike Jones



mikejones43@hotmail.com

monetary bonuses to Sailors who are willing to transfer to less popular, yet career-enhancing assignments.

For more information on Sailor Advocacy go to "Squawk Box" at [www.staynavy.navy.mil](http://www.staynavy.navy.mil).

Story by Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

## Navy Leadership Responds to PCS Fund Reduction

**C**ommitted to advocating for Sailors and their families, Navy leadership has recouped more than half of the permanent-change-of-station (PCS) funds that were lost earlier this year.

PCS funds throughout the Department of Defense were reduced by \$180 million this year in an effort to reduce unnecessary moves and their impact on families. The Navy's share of the cut was \$30 million. Of the \$30 million that was taken from the Navy's PCS account, approximately \$16 million has been identified from internal fund reprogramming.

"Navy leadership working

on behalf of Sailors and their families has made this possible," said **Chief of Naval Personnel VADM Norb Ryan Jr.** "This very clearly demonstrates our commitment to 'Sailor Advocacy.'"

"This is good news for detailers and Sailors in the fleet," said **Master Chief Electrician's Mate (SS) Ben Ray**, head enlisted detailer at **Navy Personnel Command** in Millington, Tenn. "This money will provide detailers flexibility to deal with the challenges we have faced this year, such as the war on terrorism, and allow us to continue to effectively manage our Sailors careers."

Combined with internal reprogramming and many Sailors voluntarily delaying their PCS until the next fiscal year, Navy officials are working to minimize the number of Sailors who will have their moves changed involuntarily.

"We're not done yet because there is still a shortage in PCS funds we had budgeted for," said Ryan. "Navy leadership will keep working to find solutions."

For information on the Navy Personnel Command, go to [www.bupers.navy.mil](http://www.bupers.navy.mil).

Story by Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

## NMCI – Log On and Be Heard

**I**f you lived in the barracks and weren't happy with the telephone service that your base was using, what could you do about it? In reality you probably couldn't do anything other than keep complaining to customer service. When the Navy contracts with an outside service provider, typically there is not much that the user can do to affect the service.

Recognizing that, the acquisition managers of the **Navy Marine Corps Intranet (NMCI)** included a clause in the contract that gives users a voice that also allows them to affect the incentive payments that the contractor receives.



According to **Edward Schmitz**, the lead for information technology performance measurement for the Department of the Navy chief information officer, the total value of the incentive being offered to EDS, the prime contractor on NMCI, is up to \$164 million.

"We wanted to ensure that the customer satisfaction incentive was large enough to guarantee that it was a top priority," Schmitz said.

Customer satisfaction will be measured using an online survey. Each quarter, 25 percent of the total number of NMCI users will be asked to complete the five-minute survey, according to Schmitz. By years end, all NMCI users will have had the

opportunity to respond.

The incentive is valued at up to \$100 per NMCI seat (desktop), per quarter. According to Schmitz, "if EDS scores better than 95 percent in customer satisfaction, it would receive the total \$100; they would receive \$50 per seat if the score is better than 90 percent, \$25 per seat for a score better than 85 percent. No incentive payment will be issued for anything less than that."

There are three total phases used to track customer satisfaction. The first begins before NMCI is "cutover" (initiated) at a particular command, and includes a baseline satisfaction survey along with questions that are used to obtain user

expectations. Then, during cutover to the NMCI environment, EDS will use surveys to identify

process issues and to enlist command leadership in identifying potential issues. Finally, at some point in the year following cutover and every year throughout the life of the contract, each NMCI user will be asked to complete the online customer satisfaction survey that will determine the incentive award.

For more information on NMCI, go to [www.peo-it.navy.mil](http://www.peo-it.navy.mil).

Story by Eric T. Mazzacone, Program Executive Office for Information Technology Public Affairs

# Time Capsule

This month, we look back in the *All Hands* archive to see what was going on in the month of May:



## 29 Years Ago – 1973

This colorful cover of *All Hands* was meant to reflect some of the different job and travel opportunities available in the Navy. In this issue, we educated readers on what it was like to be homeported overseas in places like Japan and the Philippines. We also looked at Navy life in Europe in places such as Spain, Greece and Italy.

We went to England to visit with a chief petty officer serving in the Royal Navy under the Personnel Exchange Program (PEP). We also published a list of Navy and Air Force recreation centers where members could go for a little time off.



## 15 Years Ago – 1987

*All Hands* gave readers the chills as we took them to Shemya Island in the Aleutians for cold-weather exercise, **Kernel Potlatch 87-1**. We also sat down for a chat with **ADM James Lyons**, commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet.

We featured a "Soviet Seminar," where Navy and Marine Corps personnel traveled around the fleet and educated members about the Soviet navy and what the Soviets think about their American counterparts. Finally, we went on a "run through the Philippine jungle" with **JEST (Jungle Environmental Survival Training)** as instructors there taught students the basic skills necessary to survive in the tropics.



## Nine Years Ago – 1993

This cover of *All Hands* featured **Illustrator/Draftsman 2nd Class Keith Wilson** doing something besides drawing: rollerblading, around Washington, D.C., as this issue was devoted to exercise and fitness. We also featured a chief personnellman who stepped her way into shape (and passed the PRT with an outstanding) through step aerobics. We looked at Sailors in Florida who found that biking to work is a great way to save money on gas and get a workout at the same time. And we looked (but not too closely) at an alligator named "Izod" from NAS New Orleans who lived on the base golf course between the first and second holes.



# Surfing Life's Waves Together



▲ **While life's distractions** can pull a father and son apart, the Navy has given this family a chance to share in their common bond, surfing Hawaii's never-ending waves.

**T**he Navy is hard work. Sailors are asked to spend long hours on the job, or deploy for several months at a time, in defense of our country. All work and no play can have negative effects on individuals and families alike, but even in times like these, Navy life can actually help draw Sailors and their families closer together.

# Surfing Life's Waves Together



▲ **What is sometimes left out** on all those commonly seen surfing videos, are the challenges surfers have to sometimes meet to get out to the waves. Here, Danny finds himself an open spot between the rocks where he can get out. After that, it sometimes takes another 10 minutes to get where he needs to be. That's usually when the video cameras turn on.



▲ **Coaching Danny is a favorite pastime** of Dan's. After finding the results of his son's set, Dan tries to keep Danny's hopes up and show him where he might have done better. "Danny and I really connect. Sometimes we're more like two best friends than father and son," said Dan.

The Navy has given **Utilitiesman 1st Class Dan Mateik** and his son, **Danny**, the opportunity to share a sport they both love — surfing.

According to Dan, a Seabee with **Construction Battalion Unit 413**, his biggest challenge in Hawaii isn't setting up a plumbing project, nor is his major life accomplishment making Sailor of the Year — although he is proud of the achievement. Instead, his list of goals is topped by a passion to crest that next big wave and help his son win major surf competitions.

"Don't get me wrong," said Dan. "I love the Navy and my job, but surfing is more than just a sport to me. It's a way of life. Here, in Hawaii, I have the best of both worlds — my life in the Navy and my life as a surfer and coach to my son."

Seeing father and son on the street might leave a person with the impression that they were nothing more than a couple of "surfer dudes" in search of that next "gnarly ride," but these two don't exactly fit that stereotype.

When Dan, his command's Sailor of the Year, dons his squared-away cammies

and goes to work, and Danny, an Honor Roll student, goes to school, they both become role models for their peers to look up to. After work and school are over though, it's time to transform back into wave riders and head to the beach.

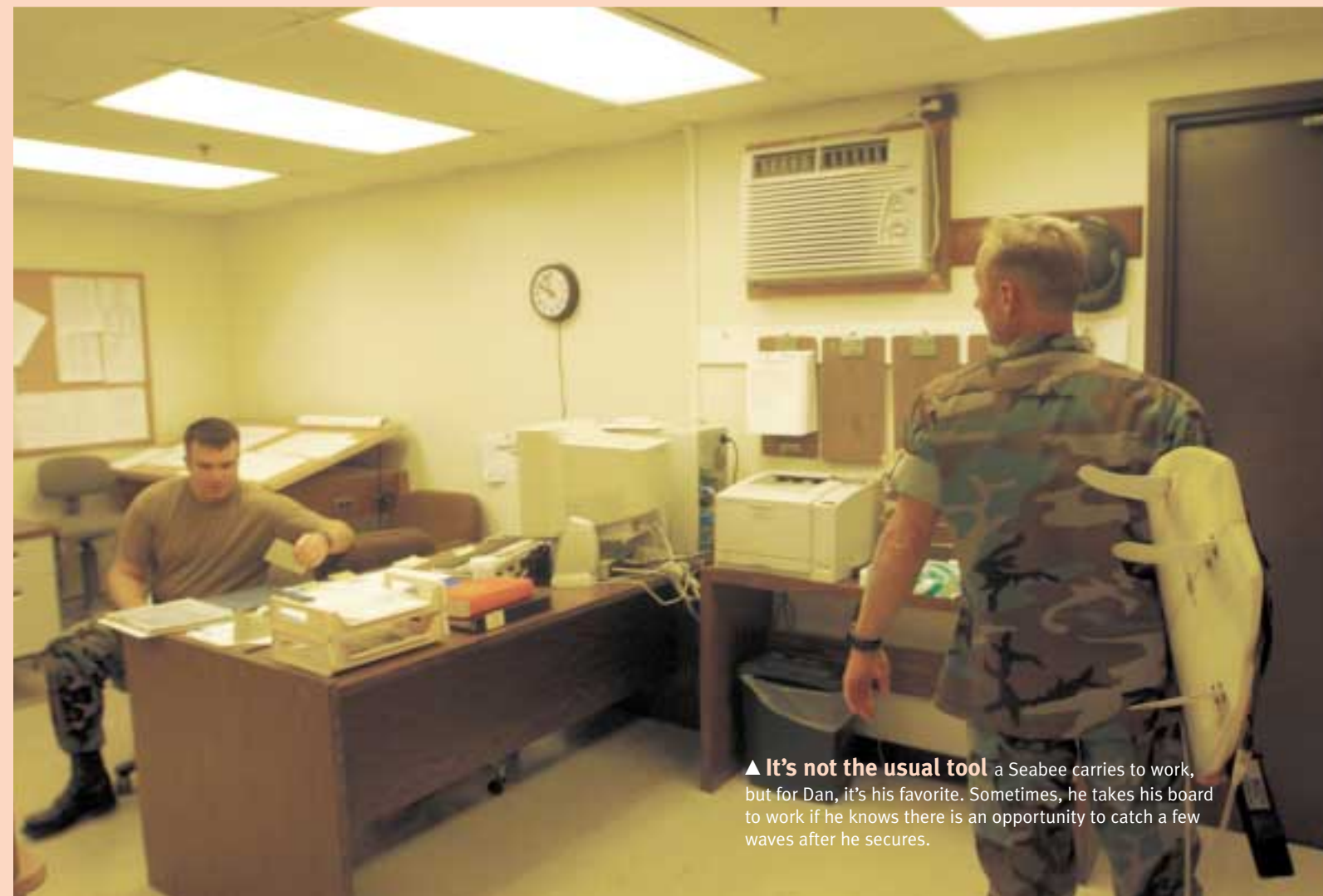
They quickly change into their surfing shorts, grab their boards, jump into their 1975 Volkswagen bus and set out for the nearest surf spot. "We've been stationed here for about one and a half years now, and we love it," said Dan.

In his 12 years in the Navy, the Seabee surfer and his family have been stationed

# Surfing Life's Waves Together



▲ **More of a “Soul Surfer”** at heart, Dan has a passion for surfing like no other.



▲ **It's not the usual tool** a Seabee carries to work, but for Dan, it's his favorite. Sometimes, he takes his board to work if he knows there is an opportunity to catch a few waves after he secures.

in such places as Bermuda, Puerto Rico and Scotland. “The waves were nice in Scotland, but it was a little too cold for my taste,” Dan added. “The Navy has been very good to me so far. I’ve been real fortunate to be stationed around water my whole career.”

Living at these duty stations has given Dan the opportunity to spend a lot of time mentoring Danny in the skills needed to become a professional surfer. He has been teaching and coaching his son since he was 11, and says the bonding experience is one of his

proudest achievements.

“I brought him out one day on one of my old surf boards and started teaching him from scratch. He soon fell in love with surfing and has been a ‘soul surfer’ ever since,” said Dan. “Danny quickly found that there’s nothing better than riding down a wave and getting that feeling of complete bliss; just you and Mother Nature.”

Danny, now 17, has surpassed the basics and is heading toward the professional side of surfing. “Danny has really found his niche in the ranks of the up-

and-coming ‘young guns’ of the Hawaii Amateur Surfing Association,” said **Mike Fulcher**, President of the Hawaii Military Surfing Ohana (HMSO), a military surfing club in Hawaii.

“I would love to eventually become a pro surfer,” said Danny, “and I’m well on my way, thanks to my dad being such a great coach.” The youngest surfer to ever place third in the Hawaii Military Surfing Championships, Danny also placed sixth in the HMSO & Budweiser 2002 International Military Surfing Championships. He holds another title,

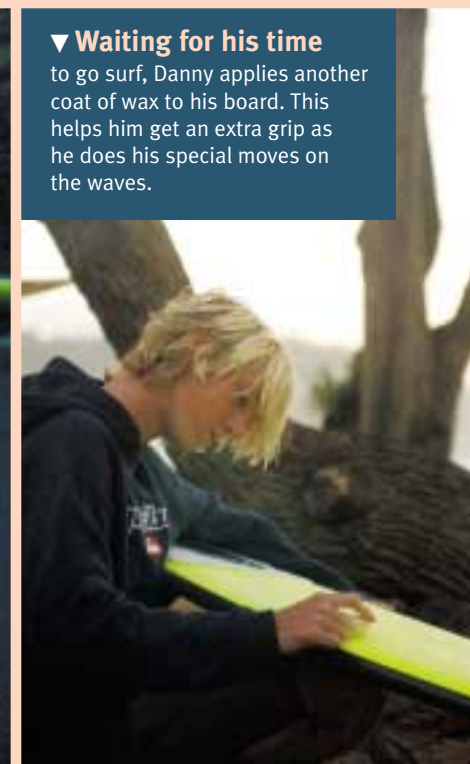
# Surfing Life's Waves Together



▲ **While at a local surf competition,** Dan looks to find his son's newest rankings, and when he will compete. "Danny is ranked as one of the top 25 youth surfers in Hawaii, which is pretty good, considering how many surfers there are here," said Dan. "I'm very proud of him."



▲ **Between sets of waves,** it can get pretty calm. That's when social hour begins. Surfers from all around will congregate like a flock of sea gulls over a school of fish. Talking about how high this wave was, or which coast is gnarley at the time, a real bond happens that only fellow surfers can understand. But as soon as the waves pick up again, everyone becomes oblivious to anyone or anything else. They scoot to their own little area and begin to ride their waves, again.



▼ **Waiting for his time** to go surf, Danny applies another coat of wax to his board. This helps him get an extra grip as he does his special moves on the waves.

too — the third generation surfer in his family.

"Surfing is definitely in the genes," said Danny. No stranger to military family life, Dan grew up the son of an Air Force lieutenant colonel in Southern California. That's where he first picked up a surfboard.

His father's surfing ability isn't the only thing Danny carries in his genes; his smarts are inside too. "My dad also taught me that I need to have something to fall back on if my pro surfer career doesn't happen. That's why I am studying to become an oceanographer," said Danny. "I need good grades for that, and that's why my parents are so strict on me about my grades. If my grades start to slack, then I won't get to surf as much."

As a club member of the HMSO, Dan has been very active with the orga-

nization's beach cleanups and competitions, hanging out with other military surfers. As for Danny, HMSO has given him the opportunity to make some great contacts the average surfer could only dream of making.

Being in the club has also helped Danny get sponsors for his surfing competitions. "Some of the club sponsors are way cool to all of us who have a military affiliation," said Danny. "The HMSO has really been influential to me, and my dad rocks for getting me involved."

Dan makes it a point to stay involved with his son, no matter what he's doing in the sea service. "Danny knows how difficult it can be sometimes with me being in the Navy," said Dan, "but he also knows how great it can be as well."

"I mean, where else could I continue my surfing lifestyle while serving my

country? It's a wonderful thing to be successful in my job, and still get to do what I love. How many people can say that they have it all and are truly happy?" he added.

When it's all said and done, both Dan and Danny seem to have figured out how to make the best of what the Navy has handed them. While his work may take him away every now and then, when it's time to play, this father and son know where their paths will meet — in the surf. ■

*Ansarov was a photojournalist for All Hands and is now assigned to Fleet Combat Camera Group Pacific, in San Diego, Strawser is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands*

**Without proper parachute landing fall** (PLF) positioning, students learn that even a short drop from the Swing Landing Trainer has the potential for injury.

# Sailors Take on the Army's Basic Airborne Course Learning to Soar

**O**ut of the night sky, an elite force silently floats to earth with one objective in mind; find the enemy and neutralize them. These paratroopers go where no one else can, when no one else can.

“We had a student this spring 2001 who completed his five jumps during the Basic Airborne Course (BAC), then went to Ranger training and made one jump there. Well, as it turned out, his seventh jump was into combat in Afghanistan,” said Aircrew Survival Equipmentman 1st Class (AW/PJ/DV) Tony Andrews, one of three Navy instructors stationed at Ft. Benning, Ga.

### Training often continues

long into the evening. BAC students practice their techniques on the 34-foot tower.

# Learning to Soar

### The 34-foot tower helps

the BAC students learn proper high-speed techniques for exiting the aircraft.

strengthens the students' unit cohesion and increases their level of discipline.

"The instructors here are great," said **Sonar Technician (Surface) 3rd Class Scott Shore**, a student in Alpha Co.

FMF corpsman, you are expected to be in just as good shape as the Marines, if not better."

During Ground Week, students begin an intensive program of instruction to

### Up before dawn for PT, BAC

students are expected to maintain a higher state of physical fitness than most other military personnel.

**Jump School is not for the faint of heart. It involves a rigorous three-week training course consisting of three separate phases – Ground Week, Tower Week and Jump Week, as well as an intense daily physical fitness regimen.**

As in the current war on terrorism, paratroopers have been, and continue to be, an incredibly valuable asset in areas often too dangerous or inaccessible for traditional ground troops.

When you think of Navy paratroopers, the first thing that may come to mind is the SEALs; but other Sailors go through Ft. Benning's "Jump School" as well. Hospital corpsmen, aircrew survival equipmentmen, Seabees, special boat unit members and explosive ordnance dis-

posal members can attend this advanced training course.

**Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class (FMF) Ray Letada**, of Naval Hospital Great Lakes, Ill., said the school will help him to be a more versatile corpsman. "If needed in a special ops situation, I can make a jump and be better able to help my Marines," he said.

The Army's 1st Battalion (Airborne), 507th Infantry Regiment has the responsibility of operating the U.S. Army

Airborne School. The instructors, known as "Black Hats" or "Sergeant Airbornes," represent all four branches of the military, with every instructor qualified as an Army jumpmaster.

Four line companies (Alpha, Bravo, Charlie and Delta) execute the BAC program of instruction.

The platoon sergeants, section sergeants and squad leaders stay with their students, training them through each phase. This continuous supervision

"Safety is the key to everything. They all want to see us make it and hit the drop zone safely."

Jump School is not for the faint of heart. It involves a rigorous three-week training course consisting of three separate phases — Ground Week, Tower Week and Jump Week, as well as an intense daily physical fitness regimen.

"At 36 years old," said Letada, "I'm one of the oldest guys in the class, but I've always kept myself in good shape. As an

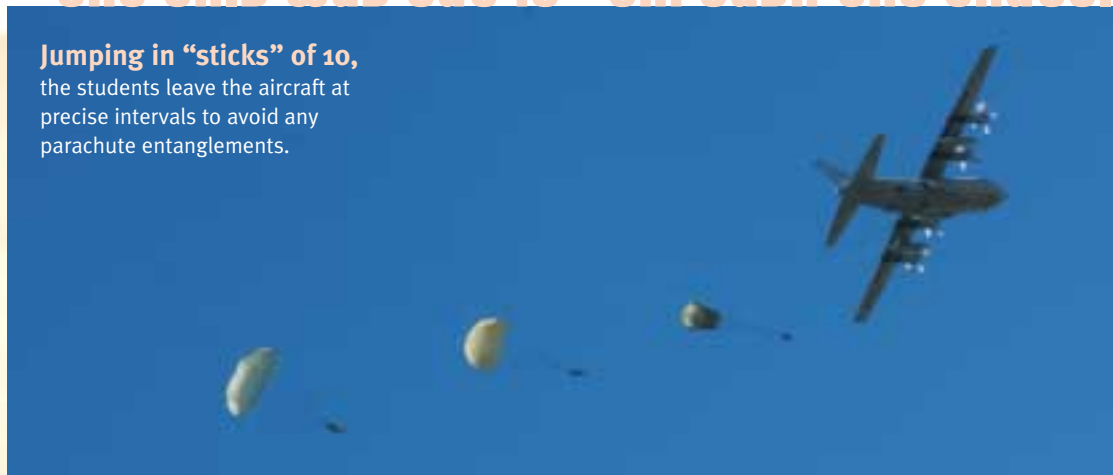
build individual airborne skills, preparing them to make a parachute jump and land safely. They train on a mock door, a 34-foot tower and a lateral drift apparatus (LDA). To proceed to Tower Week, the students must individually qualify on the tower and the LDA.

"Safety is the No. 1 priority here," said instructor Andrews. "It's a high-risk training environment here, and basically everything is oriented toward each student getting through the training. We

In an environment where attention to detail can mean life or death, infractions are met with commands like “eat boots,” having students assume this position for an extended period of time.

“It never really dawned on me until I was actually up in that plane. I thought, my Lord, in 20 minutes, the only way out is through the chute.”

Jumping in “sticks” of 10, the students leave the aircraft at precise intervals to avoid any parachute entanglements.



With arms outstretched, GM2 Davin Arvonen receives instruction in the Suspended Harness Trainer during “Tower Week.”

strive to make them ready for any contingency that may come up on a jump.”

The individual skills learned during Ground Week are refined during Tower Week, and the “mass exit” concept is added to the training. Additional apparatuses used during this week are a swing landing trainer (SLT), a suspended har-

ness and a 250-foot free tower. Tower Week completes the individual’s skill training and builds team effort skills. To go forward to Jump Week, each student must qualify on the SLT, and master the mass exit procedures from the mock door and 34-foot tower.

Jump Week is a whole different

animal. All the skills learned in the previous two weeks are finally put to use.

The students must complete five jumps. The first is with all their combat gear, and the second is a mass exit with students filing out of two doors at the same time. The next two jumps combine what they learned from the first two, with the students doing a mass exit jump with full combat gear. The last jump is made using high-speed, steerable parachutes.

“It never really dawned on me until I was actually up in that plane. I thought, my Lord, in 20 minutes, the only way out is through the chute,” said Andrews.

“On your first jump,” he continued, “they pause each student in the door and give you your own stand-by. When you stand in that open door for a couple of

**The students must complete five jumps.** The first is with all their combat gear, and the second is a mass exit, with students filing out of two doors at the same time.

seconds, it’s an eye-opening experience for your first time. As you’re looking down, you’re conquering you own fears.”

The days start early and the nights run late with the vast amount of knowledge and hands-on training crammed into this three-week course. Students are up and running at 5 a.m. They train straight through until 5 p.m., when most head for the gym or go off to study techniques learned that day. Due to the high-risk nature of the training, there is very little margin for error.

Those who cannot make the cut are not around very long. If a student has

# Learning to Soar





The mass exit drill is an important part of “Tower Week.” Students learn the correct way to exit the aircraft quickly with others coming out right behind them.

**But, one question still remains – Why do they want to jump out of a perfectly good aircraft?**

trouble grasping the jump course, they are “recycled” back to the next class. After that, if their deficiencies are not remedied, they are dropped from the training for their own safety as well as the safety of others.

An average class starts with about 360 students, but in the end, around 100 or so don’t make it.

According to **Army Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Dornin**, an instructor with Charlie Company, “The students from the sister services seem to have a lower drop-out rate than the Army students, because they are either coming from rigorous training, such as BUD/S, or they are just a little more seasoned and disciplined.”

Andrews added, the biggest challenge overall for the students is mastering the parachute landing falls (PLFs). “You’ll enjoy the ride down, but the most important part of the jump is the landing. Once you learn



**Though it looks like they aren’t** moving very fast, the jumpers head toward the earth at almost 22 feet per second.



**U.S. Army Sgt. Eric Gould** prepares to land after jumping from the 34-foot tower.

The walk back from the drop zone is a long one. BAC students must keep track of all their equipment, or they will be charged for losing it.



# Learning to Soar

how to properly land, and you can do your PLF like we instructed you – hit, shift, rotate and keep your feet together – you’ll be able to get up and walk away, do another jump and carry on with your mission. As long as you get up and brush yourself off, life is good.”

But, one question still remains – Why do they want to jump out of a perfectly good aircraft? Students seem to have their own reasons for volunteering for this type of training. “Even as a kid, I knew I wanted to do something high-speed,” said Shore, who is on his way to a SEAL team on the West Coast. “Going to BUD/S and becoming a SEAL has been a life-long dream for me. So, learning to jump out of planes is just a step along the way to that dream.”

Letada had different reasons for going to the school. “The biggest challenge for me is to be able to relax and overcome my fear of heights.”

Whether it’s learning a new skill, or overcoming personal challenges, each student takes away something different.

“The most important thing for any student to take away from this place, is to have confidence in themselves and know that any obstacle they encounter can be overcome,” summed up Andrews. “They were challenged here, and making it through this course will prepare them for whatever lies down the road.”

*Houlihan is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands*

► **Secret weapon unveiled.** This 12-pound Jack Russell Terrier named **Juul** is no pet. She's one of the Navy's military working dogs, attached to the kennel at **Naval Station Norfolk**. Her size makes it impractical to use her as a patrol dog, but her sense of smell is so keen she can detect even trace amounts of drugs. She'll signal that she's found something by sitting, ruining the career of anyone who seeks to defy the Navy's "Zero Tolerance" drug policy.

# The Long Nose of the Law

**W**hen Master-at-Arms 1st Class (SW) Derek Holman received a request to ensure a local conference center was properly screened for

any possible explosives, he looked to his partner, an expert in detecting explosive-related materials, for professional assistance.

Holman's partner scoured the area with an acute detective sense; searching under tables, chairs, corners, anywhere, and pausing only to examine a plate of unattended chocolate-chip cookies left out for those who were soon to visit.

### ▼ During their time at the DOD Military

Working Dog Training School at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, prospective dogs go through specialized training to control their aggression so handlers can recall them should the situation change. Unlike a bullet which, once fired, can't be called back, a dog can be taught to back off a suspect after loosening its grip.



▲ **Vehicle inspections** are part of the daily routine at **Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Va.** **MA1(SW) Derek Holman** and **Aramius** sweep one truck after another for possible explosives.

“No, you can’t have those,” Holman instructed. Too bad. His partner backed off the cookies and continued the search.

Holman is attached to **Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic (CNRMA)** based in the Hampton Roads, Va., area. He and his partner, a six-year-old German shepherd named “**Aramius**,” make up one of more than 30 military working dog (MWD) teams that serve the mid-Atlantic region. These specially trained Sailor/canine duos are highly dedicated, ready to serve anywhere — at anytime.

While cookies would be great, the reward Aramius really craves is his master’s praise, or a simple opportunity to play. That’s what motivates him to work so hard for so many hours a day

“Dogs are very loyal,” said **MA2(SW) Brandy Garcia**, of the K-9 unit at the **Sewell’s Point Precinct, Naval Station Norfolk**.

Indeed they are, and that’s what makes them suitable for military use. They take orders well ... no questions asked.

“Dogs don’t talk back or argue,” Holman added.

“That’s why I like them.”

The Navy currently uses more than 200 MWDs. These dogs are used in three ways: drug detection, explosive detection or patrol duty. Dogs can even be dual-trained to be a patrol/drug dog or a patrol/explosive dog. DOD, for safety reasons, doesn’t train explosive/drug dogs.

“Suppose your dog detected something and sat down,” explained Holman. (Sitting is one way a dog indicates it’s found something) “Who do you call, security to make a [drug] bust or EOD (explosive ordnance disposal)?”

Drug-sniffing dogs have been trained to seek out a host of narcotic scents, such as marijuana and ecstasy. Explosive-sniffing dogs seek all types of explosive powders and materials, including detonation cord. Patrol dogs serve as a visual deterrent (big dog, big bite). They also assist by using their noses to sniff out a suspect in hiding, and if necessary, they can get physical, pursuing a suspect and attacking on command.

While these special dogs may have some natural

abilities that make them perfect for the job, their basic training comes from one place: the DOD Military Working Dog Training School, operated by the **341st Training Squadron** at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas. The Transportation Security Administration also uses dogs trained at Lackland.

While some MWDs are bought in the United States, a large portion are purchased from vendors in Europe, as they provide a “purer-bred” dog with less joint and back problems than what is often found in American domestic breeds. Each dog is further screened to ensure it exhibits the behaviors that the military needs.

“We go to Europe and look at about 400 dogs a year,” said

# The Long Nose of the Law

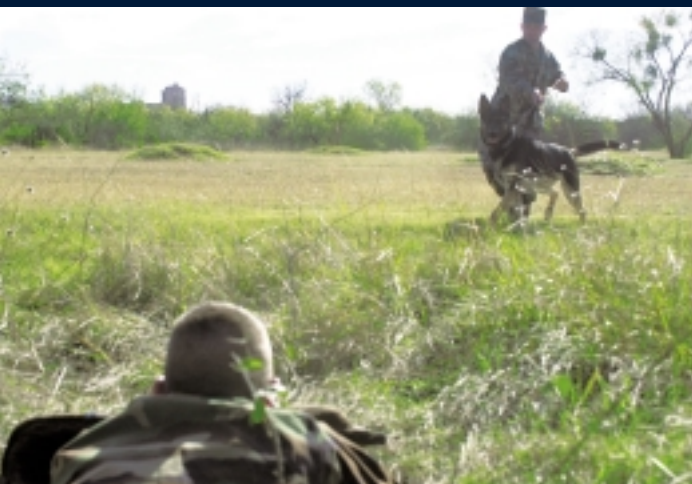


▲ **Led by Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Ariel Peldunas**, **Jumbo** sticks his whole head deep into empty boxes on a quest to find a drug-scented training aid at Lackland Air Force Base.

▼ **Juul sometimes needs a leg up** from her handler **MA2(SW) Brandy Garcia**. Being small can sometimes be a huge advantage for Juul as she gets to go to all the places the big dogs can't.



▲ **MA2 Bernie Gonzalez** is one of the dog handlers at Lackland's Medina annex. "I like the satisfaction of knowing that once this dog gets out to the field, he's going to help somebody, maybe even save somebody's life."



▲ **A dog/handler team closes in** on a "decoy" hiding in the woods. The dog picks up the smell downwind and zig-zags back and forth inside the "scent cone" cast by the decoy to determine the source location.

**MA1(SW/AW) David Highsmith**, a MWD trainer at Lackland. "We look for searching behavior, biting ability and an ability to distinguish a wrap (a thick burlap biting target that fits over the arm) from a person. We don't want a dog that will bite the wrap and not the man."

Once the dogs have been identified and purchased, they go through a four-month course at Lackland where they receive the basic-level of training required by all the services; how to sniff for explosives or drugs, and how to be a patrol dog.

Initially, explosive and drug dogs are introduced to their target scents through a type of shell game. Four small boxes with an opening on top are laid out in a room to teach the dogs two things; what that scent smells like, and what you get when you find it (a toy and verbal praise). To get the toy, you have to pick the right box.

Lackland even has special areas set aside to teach dogs to find scents in parked cars, luggage and aircraft fuselages, complete with seats.

Patrol dogs also receive aggression training for two reasons: to protect themselves and the handler, and to control their own natural aggression.

"A bullet, after it is fired, can't be brought back," said Air Force **Senior Master Sergeant James Kohlrenken**, operations superintendent of the 341st Training Squadron. "But a suspect might give up after the dog is released, which is why it's important to be

able to teach the dog to cease its attack as the situation changes."

Patrol dogs are also taught how to properly conduct a building search. They are led through an empty building and graded on how effectively they pick out the correct door with a human decoy behind it. If the dog indicates a human presence by either scratching or barking, its handler issues a verbal warning. The handler and dog then bust through the door, and the dog is allowed to bite the decoy's wrap.

All this training gives MWDs the base knowledge they need to work with any branch of service. Dogs that will work for the Navy, however, have to be trained to deal with additional obstacles such as ladder wells, fuel and paint fumes and the distraction of loud noises such as

# The Long Nose of the Law



▲ **Aramius sniffs a truck tire** at one of the gates to **Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek**. No explosives here, just rubber.

# The Long Nose of the Law

drugs. What's more amazing is that they do it all for nothing more than a "good doggie" from their handler and a chance to play with a toy ... and maybe an occasional cookie if they can get away with it. ☞

*Gunder is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands and a special assistant to Navy NewsStand at [www.news.navy.mil](http://www.news.navy.mil)*

▼ **Military working dogs** at Lackland learn how to detect a target odor in various settings. **MA2(SW) David Miller** leads **Zony**, a patrol/drug dog, on an exercise to detect a drug scent in luggage.



▲ **It's feeding time** at the **Naval Station Norfolk** kennels. Each dog is fed twice daily. One of the handlers comes behind later and tracks how much food was consumed and if any "presents" were left behind.

would think she's someone's pet."

According to some of the local MAs, **Juul** draws all kinds of attention when she's brought in for a drug sweep. Most people, who expect a big German shepherd, are astonished when they see a little terrier instead.

One person was even heard to say, "What's next? Is the Navy going to start training cats to sniff drugs?"

"Don't knock her," warns Garcia, **Juul's** handler, to anyone who would badmouth her partner. "If she detects drugs, she can ruin your career just as fast as one of our big dogs."

**Juul's** small size allows her to get into tight corners and under seats. If she picks up the odor of something she's been trained to detect, she will stand up on her hind legs and motion "up" with her nose. At that point, Garcia will lift up **Juul** to a higher shelf, or if necessary, hand-hold her while her nose goes to work.

In general, handlers love working with their dogs. And the dogs are always happy to see their handlers and go to work. "The energy they give you is just incredible," said **MA2 Robert Roller**, an MWD trainer at Lackland. "It doesn't matter to them what kind of day or week you had."

So, the next time you see an MWD, big or small, from any branch of service, remember that these dedicated animals regularly put themselves at risk, searching for explosives, chasing suspects or seeking illegal



IMC. How do sea service canines deal with it all?

"We introduce them to a ship environment and let them get used to all the noises and smells," said **MACS Scott Kuhn**, CNRMA regional kennel master/trainer. "It's just a matter of positive reinforcement through physical and verbal praise. Once he goes up the 'accom' ladder, he gets praised to let him know he's doing the right thing. Then, we get him on non-skid, and praise him again, and so on."

But a 70-pound dog can't go everywhere. In the Hampton Roads area, the Navy needed something not quite so big, to fit into submarines and smaller airplanes. So they sent a special request to Lackland for a small, energetic dog with a keen sense of smell for drug detection.

What the Navy got was "**Juul**," (sounds like jewel), a Jack Russell terrier, one of three in the Navy. Originally bred for fox hunting in England, Jack Russells have been around since the mid-1800s.

"We got her for her nose," said Kuhn. "She's our secret weapon. Because of her appearance, she and her handler could be walking through a park and people



▲ **Aramius and MA1(SW) Derek Holman** are one of the dog/handler teams stationed at **Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek**, under Commander Navy Region Mid-Atlantic. A certified patrol/explosives detection dog, **Aramius** has performed many jobs with Holman, including security for the 2001 Presidential Inauguration.

**A**hhh, Hawaii. One of the most amazing states in the country when it comes to doing just about anything recreational. Whether you're into skydiving, kayaking or mountain biking, this is the place for you.



◀ **Making their traditional call** to the four corners, these participants in the weekly luau at the military's Hale Koa resort hotel blow through their native conch shells, producing a distinctive horn sound.

# Fun in Hawaii

There's snorkeling, surfing and deep sea fishing, if that's what floats your boat. You can even go hiking, horseback riding or just take a sunset stroll on the beach.

Most Sailors stationed here say without a doubt that if you can't have fun here, you are in definite need of help. And you can get that at the Navy's **Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Liberty/Outdoor Department** at Pearl Harbor.

"We probably do more [event scheduling] than any other place in the world," said Ken Cornia, the outdoor recreation specialist for MWR in Pearl Harbor. "We like to call ourselves industrial strength programming." He can back that claim up with the plethora of events he has scheduled year round. "We don't normally have an off-season like other places, because the weather here is beautiful all year long."

Great weather makes for great fun outdoors, and one of the major activities military members like to do is learn to sail. Sailing lessons and certification are offered through MWR every weekend.

"We get anywhere from four to 20 military personnel a week wanting to learn how to sail, and we are ready to teach them and even get them certified," said Mike Cervantes, the assistant sailing instructor. Certification costs around \$100, but single Sailors can get certified for free through MWR's Single Sailor Program.

"This is a great place for Single Sailors, and any military member, to come and learn how to sail and get certified without it costing a great deal," said **Equipment Operator 1st Class Blake Kessler**, a reservist called to active duty in Hawaii. "Granted, you can learn to sail just about anywhere there's water, but what better place to learn than on the crystal blue waters of Hawaii."

Another big outdoor attraction is the Navy-Marine Corps Golf Course, located near the Honolulu International Airport. Sometimes called the "Pearl of the Pacific," this 54-year-old golf course features lavish greens to play on. It's rated as one of the top 10 military courses in the United States. "This is a lovely course, and I try to play on it once a week," said Richard Yasuda, a National Guardsman stationed in Hawaii.

Along with the normal recreational events that MWR schedules almost every day for Sailors stationed here, they also cater to every Navy ship that visits this majestic place with its utopian atmosphere. "We are very unique, because of the [number] of ships from around the world that make port calls to our base. We get battle groups on a regular basis, and since the start of our war against terrorism, we are seeing [many]

► **One of the islands'** best military spots is what is known as the "Pearl of the Pacific." Centrally located just a couple miles from Pearl Harbor, the Navy-Marine Corps golf course is one of the finest military golf courses in the world. "This place is lovely," said Richard Yasuda, a National Gaurdsman stationed in Hawaii. "I try to come out about once a week."

▼ **Retired Air Force Master Sgt. Richard Fiske** is one of many survivors who daily donate their time to tell their story to the hundreds of visitors at the Arizona Memorial in Pearl Harbor. Fiske was on the quarterdeck of **USS West Virginia (BB 48)** on that fateful December morning, more than 60 years ago.

▼ **No visit to Hawaii** is complete without a traditional luau. Known for its award-winning entertainment host, Danny Couch, the Hale Koa luau is filled with Hawaiian tradition in the lush Luau Garden.



# Fun in Hawaii



▲ **One of the military's hidden treasures** are the cottages spread throughout the different bases. With some, like this one at Kaneohe Marine Corps Base, renting for as low as \$30 a night, these cottages have luxury views, and many are within walking distance to the beach. Friends and family members can enjoy their fantasy vacation while sticking to a tight budget.

more,” Cornia said. MWR can service hundreds of Sailors at a time, with various programs — sometimes five in one day when a carrier is in port.

Recently **USS *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70)** pulled into Hawaii for a five-day stay, and the MWR staff went into full swing to make sure the crew had plenty of exciting things to see and do. The MWR staff set up eight different tours and activities for the crew. Each event ran the same time every day, giving everyone a chance to enjoy what Hawaii has to offer.

Activities included hiking, biking, snorkeling, surfing and horseback riding. “I tried to fit in all of the different activities that I could on my days off,” said **Seaman Dustin Gustafson**, a ***Carl Vinson*** Sailor. “There was so much to see and do – it was great. Hopefully I’ll get to come back on leave and spend a week or two here,” he added.

If taking leave in Hawaii sounds like fun, the Morale Welfare and Recreation Center, along with the military’s Hale Koa Hotel, makes Hawaii an affordable vacation spot. MWR can help you plan your vacation activities, and they offer discounts ranging from 20 to 50 percent off the regular price.

The **Hale Koa Hotel** offers the splendor and spectacle of ancient Hawaiian traditions, but at a price that Sailors can afford. All hotel rates are based on military rank. This world-class resort sits on 72 lush tropical acres, and it borders the beach at Waikiki. The beaches are well kept and very clean. “They are not crowded, with people practically lying on top of one another, like I’ve seen at other beaches,” said **Air Force Maj. Mark Christensen**.

The rooms at the Hale Koa offer amazing and inspiring views of the Pacific Ocean and the majestic beauty of the Ko’olau mountain range. “This is definitely the place for military members to stay at a great price,” said **Air Force 1st Lt. Jonathan Boling**. “My wife, Amy, and I are on our honeymoon, and I can’t think of a better place to be than in gorgeous Hawaii. What a paradise! The hotel is beautiful, too. We have a very nice room on the top floor.”

The Moral Welfare and Recreation Center at Pearl Harbor lives up to its motto — “We’re here for you” — by providing a wide range of exceptional programs and activities at discounted prices. So, if your ship is coming in to Hawaii, or you’re able to take leave in this paradise, be assured that fun is just a visit or phone call away. **SH**

*A photojournalist formerly assigned to All Hands, Ansarov is now assigned to Fleet Combat Camera Pacific, in San Diego*



Photo courtesy of the Hale Koa Hotel

▲ **One of the finest hotels** in Waikiki, the Hale Koa (Hawaiian for House of the Warrior), is an 817-room, world-class resort hotel, and favorite R&R destination for our country’s military personnel. The Hale Koa’s mission is simple: “To operate a first-class hotel and recreation facility at affordable prices for military members and their families.”

► **The night of Hale Koa’s** luau is filled with the art and tradition of Hawaii’s many diverse cultures. Here, a group of women dance a traditional hula on stage, while the crowd enjoy’s native dishes such as lomi lomi salmon and kalua pig.

▼ **One of the many daily** beauties of Hawaii is its majestic sunsets. Every one of them is different and awe-inspiring.



▼ **Only someone who has** been there, can know the feeling that comes from walking down the memorial, glancing at the sunken ship, and seeing the list of names at the end of the hall. “It is definitely something every person should see in their lifetime,” said one visitor to the **USS *Arizona*** memorial.



# 24 Seven

On Duty On-the-Hour Every Hour

Story and photo by PH2 Aaron Ansarov

**M**ost Sailors stationed aboard ship know what standing pier sentry is all about; maintaining ship's security, checking those ID cards, and searching bags; all while keeping a watchful eye for anything out of the ordinary. But in recent times, watchstanders know better than ever what the term "first line of defense" means.

"In my 15 months on board, I've easily stood over a hundred watches as pier sentry," said Seaman Justin Gilbeau, stationed on board **USS Stethem (DDG 63)**. "But every watch will always be as important as the next... especially now."

Maintaining that "ever watchful eye" is the one thing that keeps these Sailors on constant alert as they stand their watches. "We are always being trained by senior shipmates that have stood these watches before and know what to do in pretty much any kind of situation," said Gilbeau.

"It's that necessary evil that keeps our Sailors safe," said **Electronic's Technician 1st Class (SW) Judd R. Penland**, who for more than three years, has acted as **Officer of the Deck** during the eight to 12 watch on **Stethem's** quarterdeck.

With the threat of terror ever prevalent, security is one of the most serious duties a Sailor can have, and these Sailors don't take it lightly. "I haven't ever been part of any real life scenario as yet, and hope I never have to be, but I am very prepared and know what to do if anything were to happen," said Gilbeau. 🇺🇸

## Pier Sentry

# Eye on the Fleet

**Eye on the Fleet** is a monthly photo feature sponsored by the Chief of Information Navy Visual News Service. We are looking for **high impact**, quality photography from **Sailors** in the fleet to showcase the American Sailor in **action**.



◀ **Soaring Seahawk**  
An SH-60F assigned to Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron (HS) 8, conducts plane guard maneuvers near **USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74)**.

Photo by PHAN Tina Lamb



◀ **Lights Out**  
Just because it gets dark, there's no reason to stop studying. **AB3(AW) Tara Fernando** helps **AN Carlos Oquendo** study for his Aviation Warfare Specialist Qualification while at sea aboard **USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6)**. The lights are out because they are in a space adjacent to the flight deck, and the ship is still at flight quarters. Both Sailors are deployed in the North Arabian Sea in support of **Operation Enduring Freedom**.

Photo by PHC Spike Call



◀ **X Mark**  
A member of **Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 5** floats to the ground after jumping from a **CH-46 Helicopter** during a static line jump in Talofofo, Guam.

Photo By PH2 Crystal Brooks



**Morning Fill-Up ▶**  
**SN Tiffany Huddleston** stands by as **USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74)** takes on fuel and supplies during an underway replenishment with Fast Combat Support Ship **USS Bridge (AOE 10)**.

Photo by PHAN Tina Lamb



**Fire One ▶**  
A Standard missile, on an intercept course with an incoming "hostile" drone, leaves a trail of smoke off **USS Vandgrift's (FFG 48)** starboard side during an anti-ship missile defense training evolution as part of the **Commander Task Force (CTF) 75** Multi-Sail Battle Group Interoperability Exercise.

Photo by IS1 Matthew Rubie

**To be considered**, forward your **high resolution (5" x 7" at 300 dpi)** images with full credit and cutline information, including **full name, rank and duty station**. Name all identifiable people within the photo and include important information about what is happening, where the photo was taken and the date. Commands with digital photo capability can send attached .jpg files to: [navynewsphoto@hq.navy.mil](mailto:navynewsphoto@hq.navy.mil)

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# Eye on History

**Eye on History** is a monthly photo feature sponsored by the Naval Historical Center.

For more photos pertaining to naval history, go to [www.history.navy.mil](http://www.history.navy.mil).



◀ **1945**  
Chaplain (LCDR) Joseph O'Callahan administers last rites to a crewman aboard **USS Franklin (CV 13)**. Fifty miles away from the Japanese mainland, a single enemy plane dropped two semi-armored bombs, hitting the center and the aft of the ship. LCDR O'Callahan received the Medal of Honor for administering last rites; organizing and directing firefighting and rescue parties; and leading men below to wet down magazines that threatened to explode.



◀ **1921**  
The funeral parade of The Unknown Soldier passes across Key Bridge toward Virginia and Arlington National Cemetery.

*U.S. Navy Photos Courtesy of the Naval Historical Center*



**1898** ▶  
A funeral procession in the streets of Havana, Cuba, for crewmen killed when the **USS Maine** exploded in Havana Harbor.



◀ **1943**  
While the living comrades of those buried in a New Caledonia cemetery stand at salute, a bugle sounds "taps" — voicing the promise that they have not died in vain.



**1982** ▶  
The first black granite slab is dedicated at the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Photo courtesy of Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund

# Embracing the Vietnam Veteran

Story by JOCS(AW) Dave Desilets

Since 9/11, our country has been swept up in a wave of military support not witnessed by history since the return of our service men and women in World War II.

But why the long gap between moments of such enormous national pride for our Armed Forces?

Not that war should be excessively glorified to the extent of exalted jubilation, but the sacrifices made by those who wear our country's cloth in battle should be duly noted and appreciated by those whose interests they were defending.

The Korean Conflict may not have been popular in its time, but its underlying principle against communism was widely supported. Still, many of its 6.8 million veterans did not experience the same national gratitude received by their World War II counterparts. Yet now, our nation is in the midst of a five-year, 50th anniversary campaign of remembrance.

And maybe the Gulf War of 1991-92 was not so long ago as yet in America's eyes that it is compelled to memorialize it, but our country did tie yellow ribbons around trees and welcomed home its more than 1.1 million Gulf-deployed veterans.

However, there were no parades and public embraces for America's military returning from Vietnam. One of our country's longest and bloodiest conflicts, this 11-year war was the first to play out on televisions in our homes. First in black and white, later in color, the nation witnessed the same shocking carnage and plumes of smoke that so defined the terrorist attacks on New York City (NYC) and the Pentagon. However, there was no immediate patriotic rally for our military then such as that which exists today.

To emphasize this point: even before the first American shots were fired in today's war against terrorism, *All Hands* photographers received an overwhelming amount of adulation as they walked NYC streets in uniform, covering the aftermath of September 11th. They couldn't buy a cup of coffee or pay for a meal. Even their train fare was free with an appreciative smile.

In the same city and across the nation, then, now and ever since they returned to our shores, numerous Vietnam vets have been homeless, begging for that same cup o' Joe. According to the Veterans Administration (VA), there are an estimated 250,000 veterans on our streets at any given time – nearly 500,000 annually; a majority of them served during the Vietnam War and have no place to call home.

As a nation, this sad fact should eat at our collective conscience. For many it has, and today, there are those who rightly offer previously shunned vets assistance. One such effort is the VA-sponsored Stand Down program. Begun in 1988, Stand Down is coordinated through local agencies and governments to offer homeless vets food; shelter; clothing; health screenings; VA and Social Security benefits counseling; and referrals to a variety of other necessary services, such as housing, employment and substance abuse treatment.

The Vietnam veterans' plight was not helped in any manner by their depiction in movies and on television. It is only recently that the same mediums have now begun to more properly represent the sacrifices and service of Vietnam War veterans.

One movie, which I recently saw, "We Were Soldiers", portrays a desperate battle fought in Ia Drang River Valley of Vietnam by frightened and determined warriors who were young and naive, yet brave and proud to serve. At the end of the movie (*If you haven't seen it, I'm not giving anything away here. The moment will still move you, as it should.*), a wounded and bandaged soldier is shown arriving at an airport in a wheel chair pushed by another soldier. The icy stares and cold shoulders of passers by harshly greet both. This sobering scene is followed by the names of the 79 members of the **Army 7th Air Cavalry** who gave the ultimate sacrifice in the Vietnam area now known as the Valley of Death. Throughout the theater, I could hear uncontrollable sobs; myself included, as the names scrolled by.

More than 58,000 of our Armed Forces personnel gave their lives in-theater. More than 9.2 million valiantly served. For the estimated 8 million who remain today, it's not our tears they need this Memorial Day, but our apologies and long overdue embraces.

On CBS's "60 Minutes II" broadcast earlier this year, retired **U.S. Army Gen. Harold Moore**, who led a battalion of the 7th Air Cavalry in Vietnam as a lieutenant colonel in November 1965, and whose story is featured in "We Were Soldiers," simply stated, "Hate war — Love the American warrior."

It is possible that the current tide of public support for the new war will pass. However, may it roll on for all our service members, and may it swell ever more for our Vietnam veterans. **S**

*Desilets is Managing Editor of All Hands*

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IT1(SW) Tristan Borne:

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